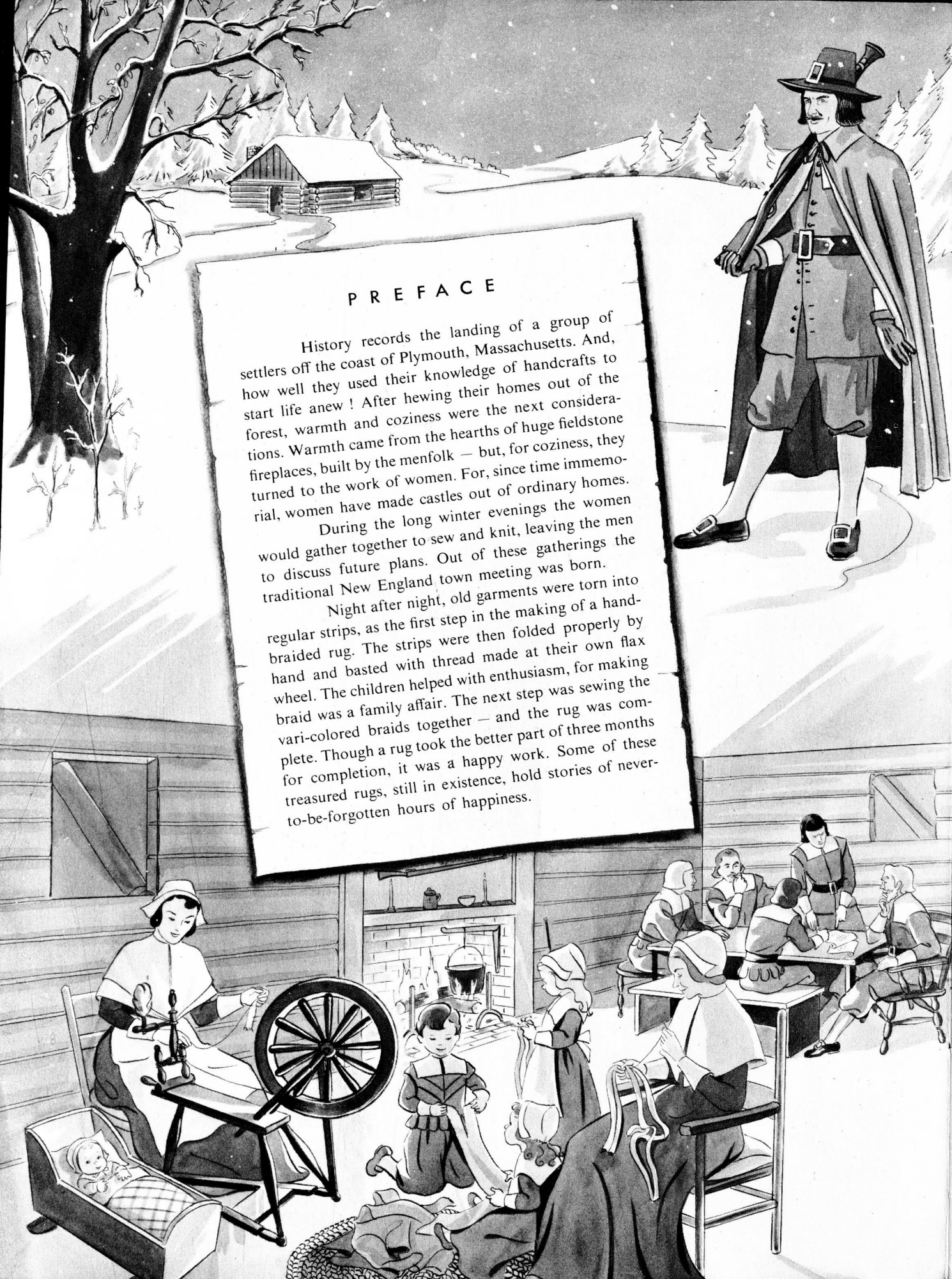
HOW TO BRAID A RUG

in One Day



PREFACE

History records the landing of a group of settlers off the coast of Plymouth, Massachusetts. And, how well they used their knowledge of handcrafts to start life anew ! After hewing their homes out of the forest, warmth and coziness were the next considerations. Warmth came from the hearths of huge fieldstone fireplaces, built by the menfolk — but, for coziness, they turned to the work of women. For, since time immemorial, women have made castles out of ordinary homes.

During the long winter evenings the women would gather together to sew and knit, leaving the men to discuss future plans. Out of these gatherings the traditional New England town meeting was born.

Night after night, old garments were torn into regular strips, as the first step in the making of a hand-braided rug. The strips were then folded properly by hand and basted with thread made at their own flax wheel. The children helped with enthusiasm, for making braid was a family affair. The next step was sewing the vari-colored braids together — and the rug was complete. Though a rug took the better part of three months for completion, it was a happy work. Some of these treasured rugs, still in existence, hold stories of never-to-be-forgotten hours of happiness.

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In the days before machines made our existence so fast-paced, grandmother possessed a great deal of patience. Her many duties, which could only be performed by hand, required it. However, one of the pleasures rewarding her patience, was the enjoyable work on her braided rug.

Worn-out garments, old blankets and towels were stored for months in the attic, waiting for the day when a sufficient quantity was available to make a rug. Then the ritual began.

First, the cloth was cut into strips of the desired width. These strips were rolled into balls and set aside until all the cutting was finished. About two weeks were spent in this first stage of the rug. Then the strips were pressed flat with a hot iron, making them easier to handle and smoothing out all wrinkles. After the raw edges were folded in toward the center of the cloth, another fold was taken. This fold was pressed and basted neatly with a strong thread. If the cloth did not have sufficient weight, a "filler" was used, consisting of pieces of cotton or rags.

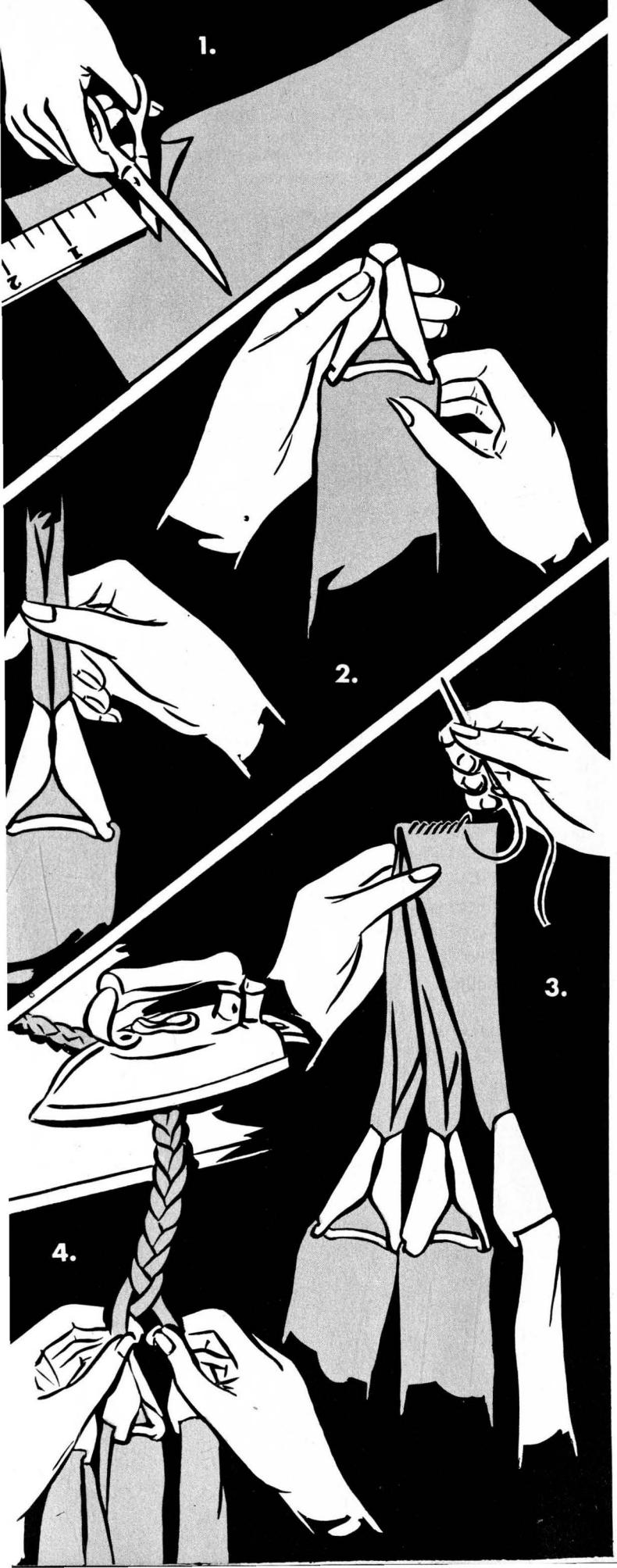
In starting the braid, three strips were placed together and stitched at the top. Something heavy, such as a flat iron, was utilized to hold the braid on the surface of the table. Braiding was easy, since it was done in the same manner as hair-braiding. Whenever a strand became short, another piece was added, being sewn on the bias.

The center piece was made by using a braid twice the length of the center, then folding it in half and sewing carefully along the inside edge. Any size rug could be made this way by using the following rule: the length of the center braid should always be the difference (in feet) between the width and the length of the finished rug.

The progress of the braiding was linked to the sewing together of the completed braids. A few feet at a time of braiding, then sewing to the opposite braid—on one, or both sides of the rug. Of course, it would be impossible to get a completely reversible rug with this method—since all the threads would show on at least one side of the rug. Toward completion of the rug, the braid was cut to a tapered point to make a less conspicuous ending, when sewn to the final edge of the rug which was now ready for the floor.

Today, grandmother would show quite a bit of jealousy and amazement at the modern, trouble-free time-savers that have been developed. Braided rug making is easy for the modern woman. There is the metal folder which automatically folds the cloth strips and thoroughly prepares the material for braiding. The tiresome task of sewing has been eliminated. The modern rug lacer makes each rug reversible for the first time in the history of this time-honored art.

We sincerely hope this booklet will be an aid and an inspiration to those who are interested in making braided rugs. Whether you try the old-fashioned way, or the modern method, we wish you many happy hours of enjoyment.



1. Cut or tear the material into 1½" strips. Measure with ruler for accuracy.

2. Thread a strip of material through each of the three folders. Slide the material through the bar opening and it will come out of the small end folded.

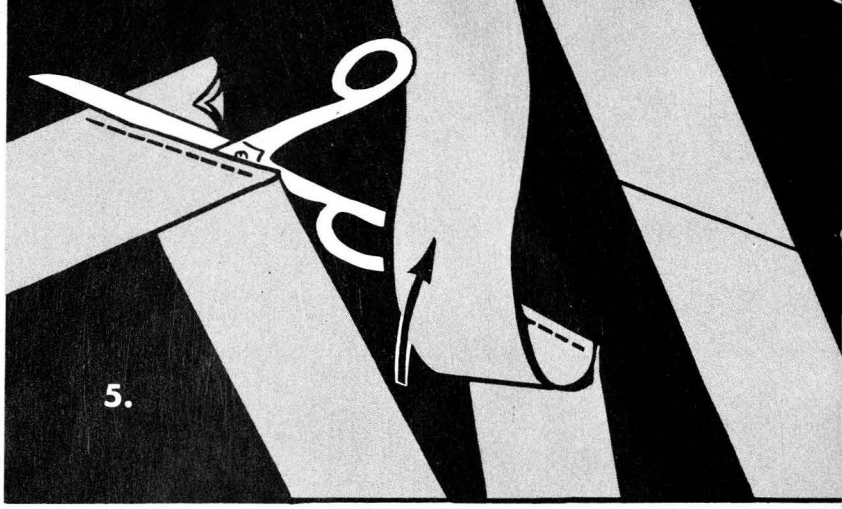
3. Sew the three strips of material together, using an overcast stitch. You are now ready to braid.

4. Place a heavy object (such as a flat iron) over the three strips to hold them firmly to prevent slipping as you braid. Braid as you would your hair and slide the material folders down as you braid.

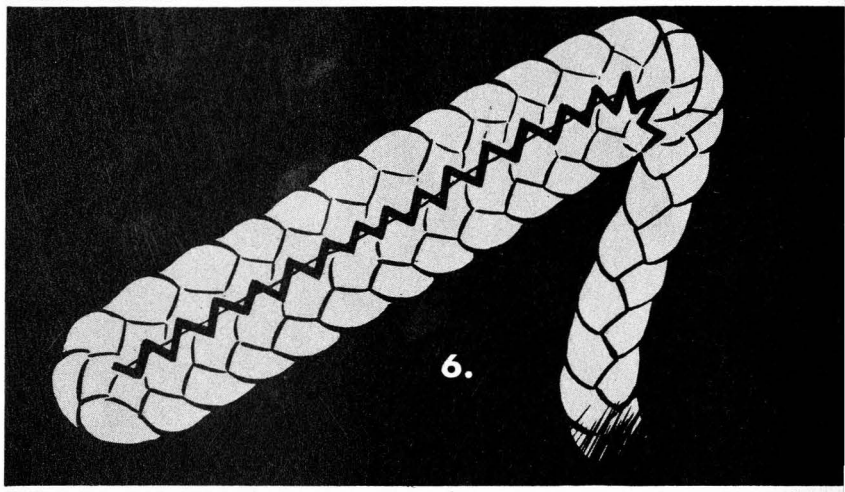
CHART OF CENTER BRAID LENGTHS

2 Foot	by	3 Foot Rug	— 1 Foot Center Braid
3 Foot	by	4 Foot Rug	— 1 Foot Center Braid
3 Foot	by	5 Foot Rug	— 2 Foot Center Braid
4 Foot	by	6 Foot Rug	— 2 Foot Center Braid
5 Foot	by	7 Foot Rug	— 2 Foot Center Braid
6 Foot	by	9 Foot Rug	— 3 Foot Center Braid
8 Foot	by	10 Foot Rug	— 2 Foot Center Braid
9 Foot	by	11 Foot Rug	— 2 Foot Center Braid
9 Foot	by	12 Foot Rug	— 3 Foot Center Braid

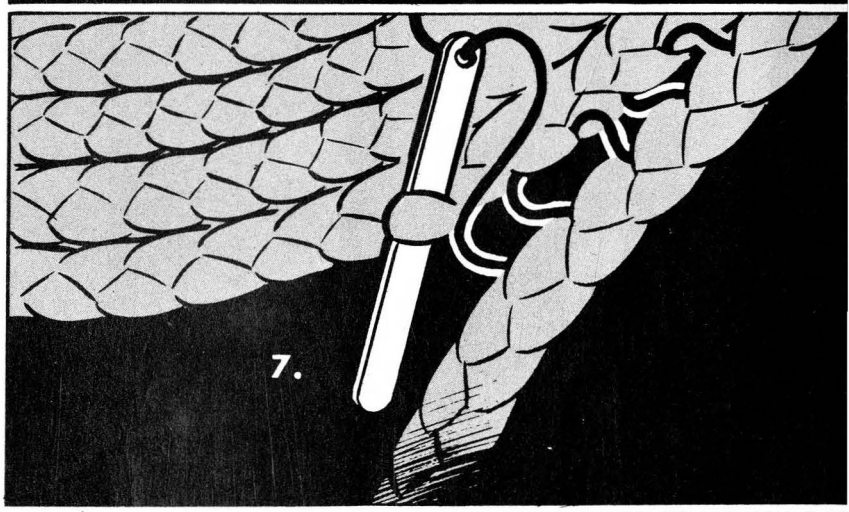
5. When you have braided a length of material it is easy to sew on additional strips. The ends are lapped at right angles and sewed together on the bias with a running stitch. Cut the excess triangle of material off ⅛" away from stitching.



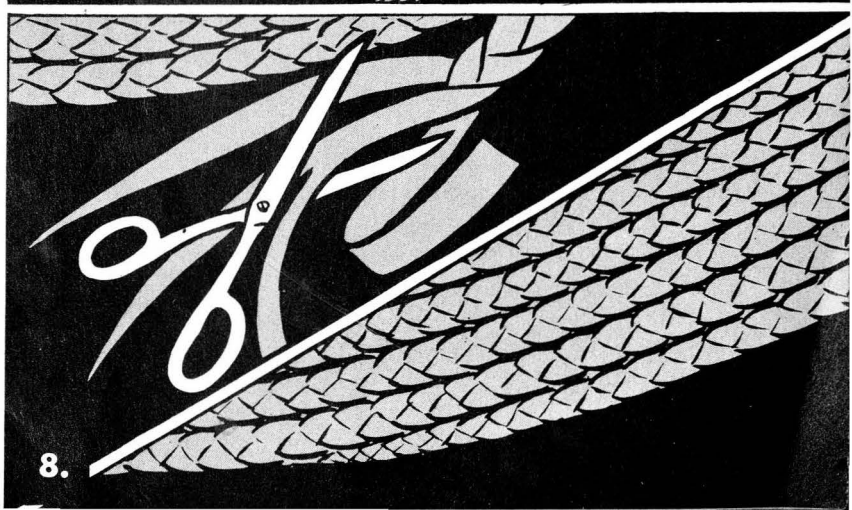
6. To start your rug, bend the braid in half (see chart at lower right of previous page for length of braid). With a darning needle and a good strong carpet thread sew all the way down this center braid, sewing over where you joined the three original strips together (see illustration 3). You are now ready to start the third row of your rug.

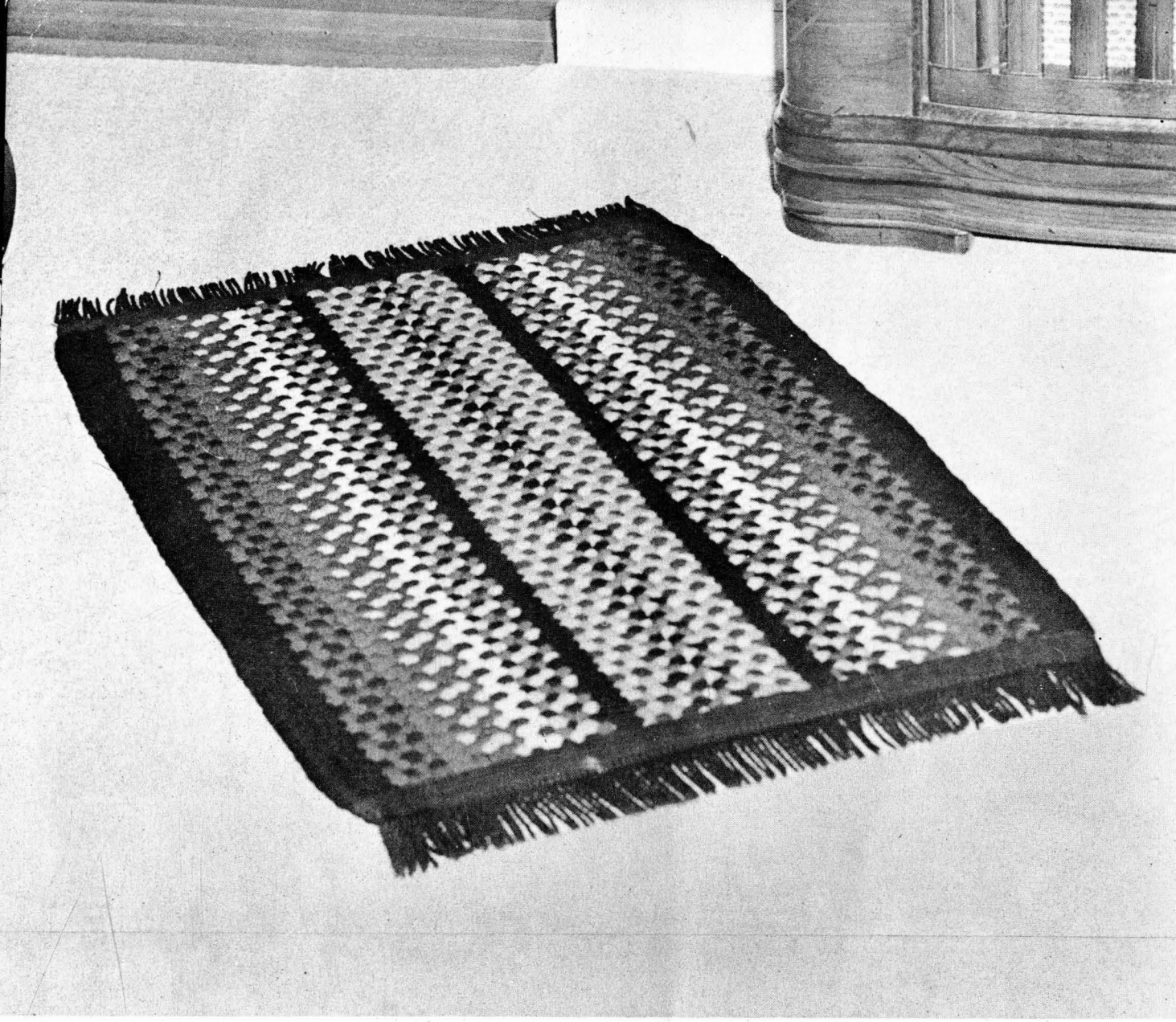


7. Remove the darning needle from thread. Thread your lacer on this same thread and lace the braids together by weaving the lacer in and out of the loops. When the thread becomes short, leave your lacer threaded and tie on another length of thread.



8. Finish off your rug by tapering the ends of the three strips to a point. Be sure the three ends are equal in length. Braid to the end of the strips and sew the end of the braid neatly to the edge of the rug.





In a color blend of black, red and grey, this attractive occasional rug consists of 28 single braids, which are laced together. It can be made in any length or width desired; would be suitable for a hall runner. The fringed tape, obtainable in most department stores, is sewed on by hand to complete the effect.

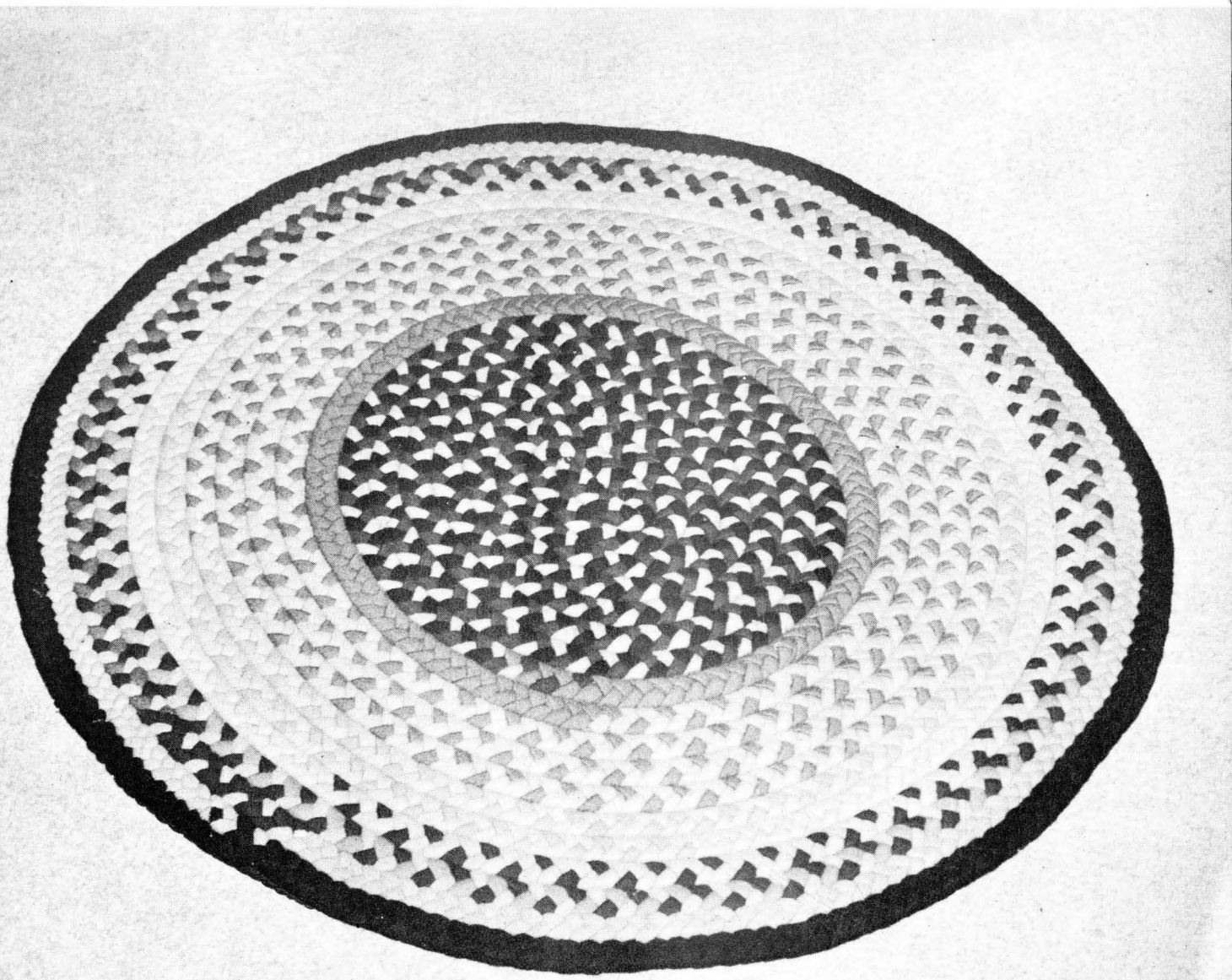
Although this shape and design has no background of tradition, it is becoming increasingly popular.

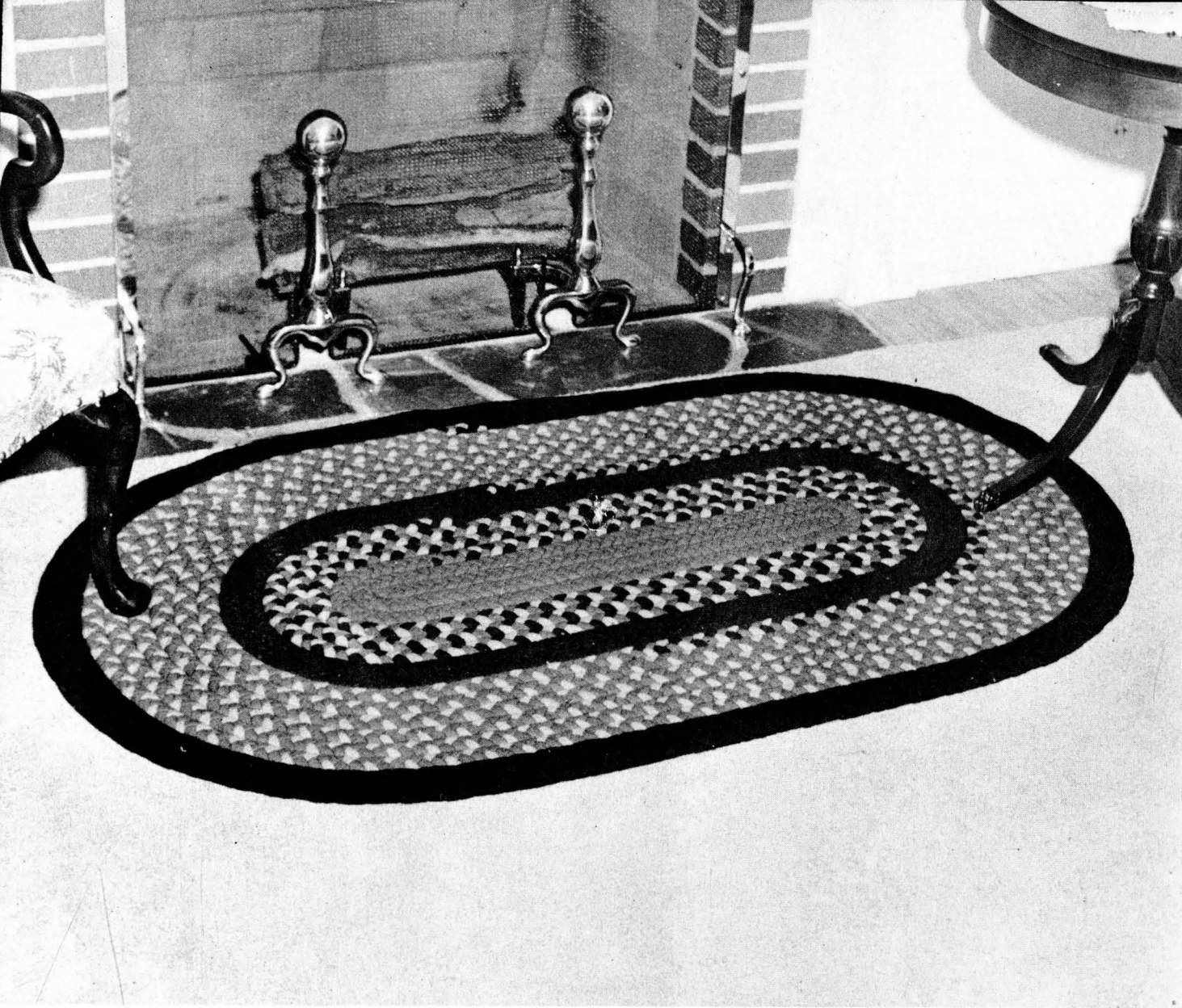
The Chesterton

The New Englander

This old-fashioned New England rug is made up of 20 complete circles. Grey, light and dark blue compose the center, which is further enriched by several shades of blue and grey, and rimmed with black, or dark blue.

Familiarly known as an "in-between" rug, the New Englander may grace the floor of the master chamber, or scatter before the kitchen hearth.





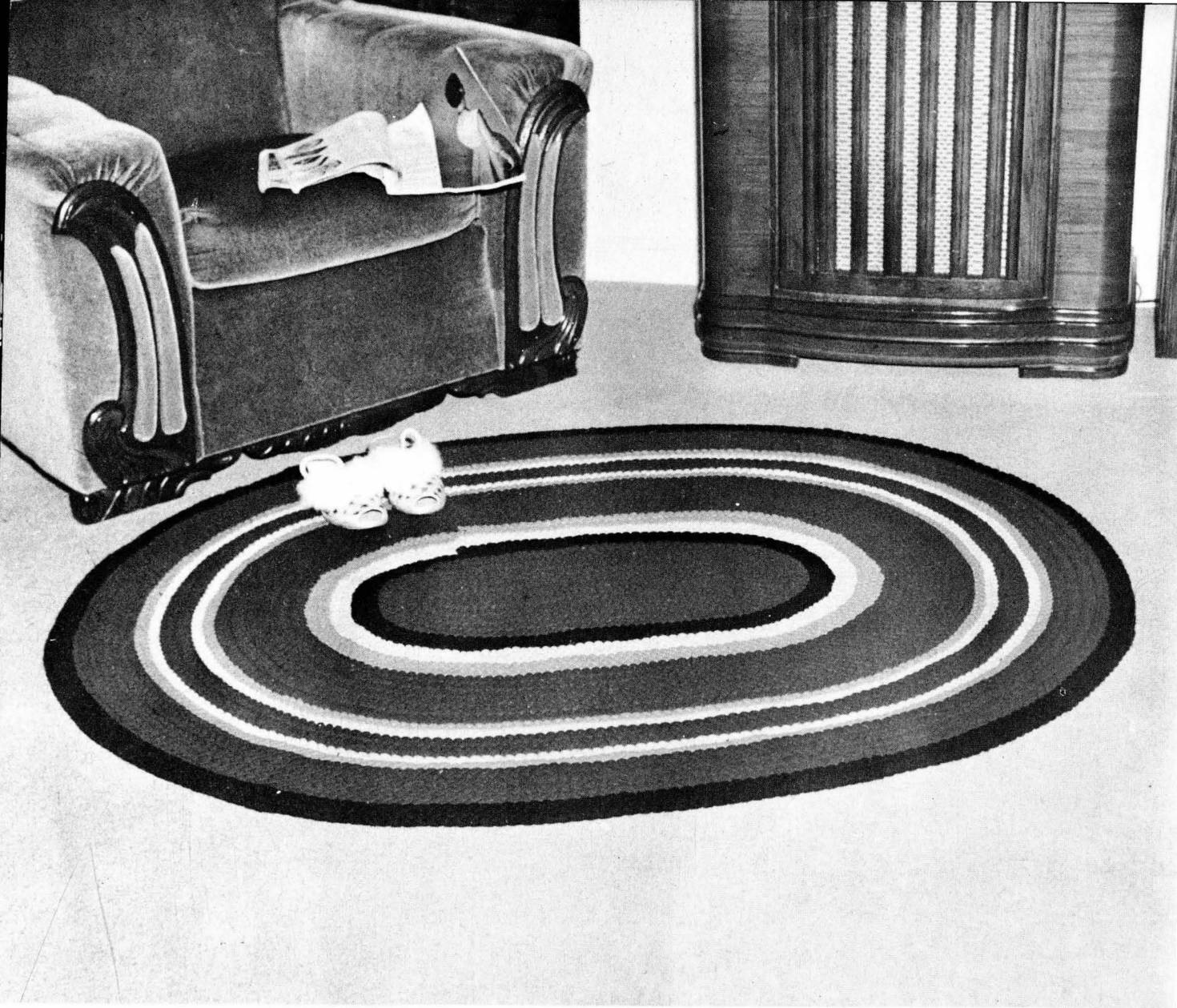
The oval rug pictured below accentuates the beauty and warmth of the fireplace. Consisting of 16 complete circles, the center piece is solid red, followed by a mixture of red, grey and brown — with a double row of black for the outside border.

Simple in design, it blends especially well with early pine furniture, as well as today's reproductions.

The Hampshire

Adding beauty to any home, this staircase runner is made by lacing individual braids together to any desired length. The one pictured above is comprised of two shades of green, red, grey and black.

This covering not only protects the stair treads, but adds grace and charm to the welcome of Slumberland's entrance.

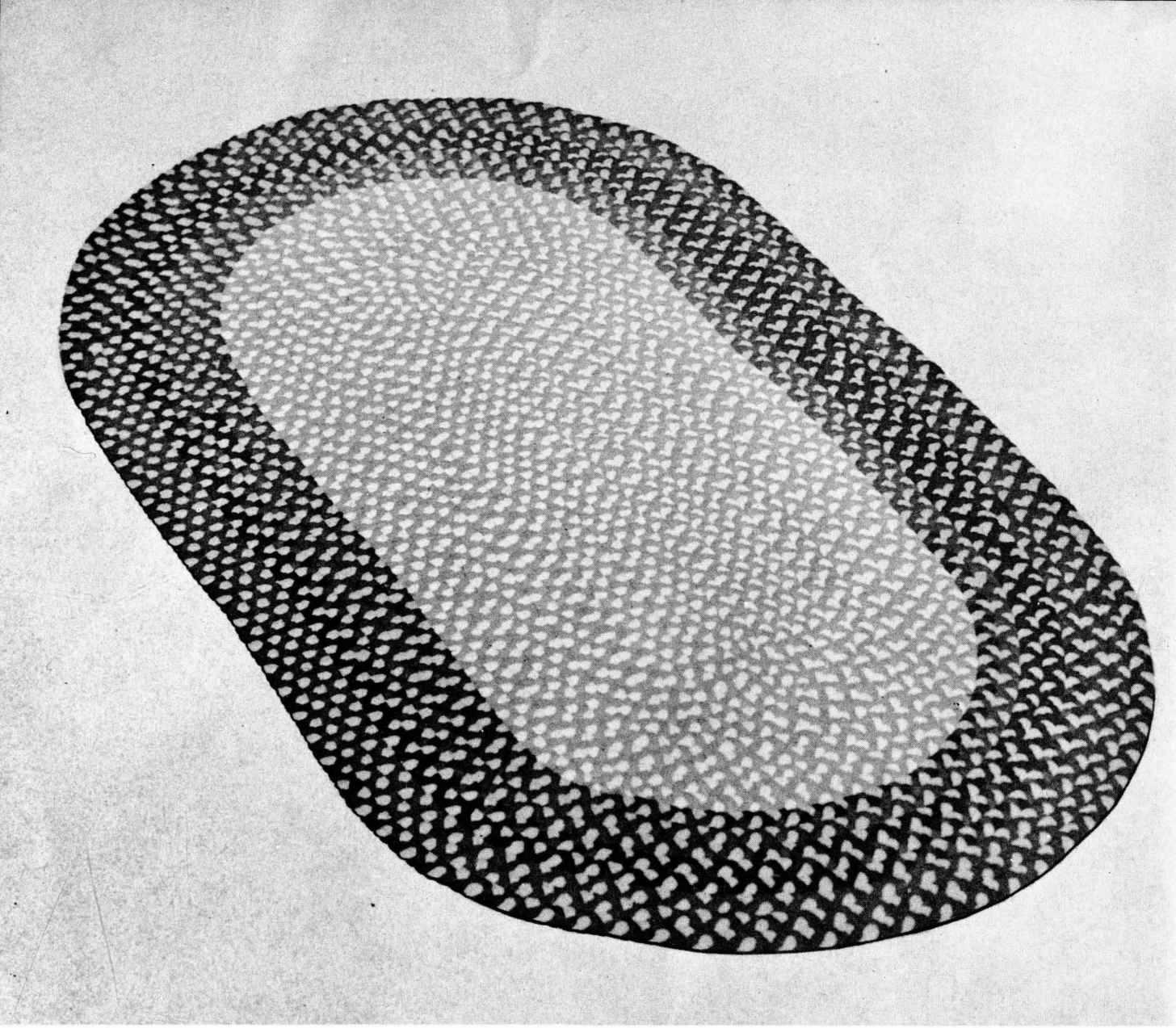


To blend with your Empire, Victorian or Early American collections — this very popular design has a predominantly brown center, balanced with two shades of yellow and a combination of green and black. It has been particularly chosen for this booklet by the request of numerous antique connoisseurs!

The Plymouth

The Colonial

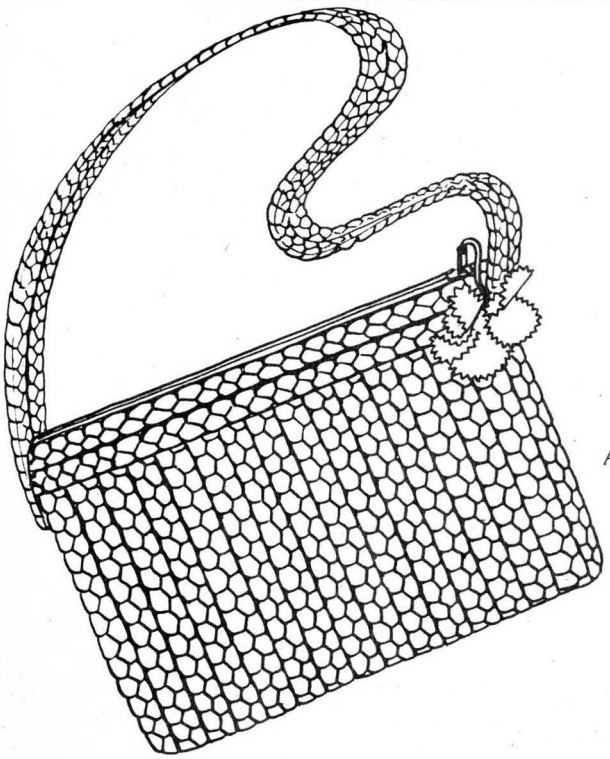
Shown above, this intriguing Early American rug was braided from discarded garments and other odd pieces. Generally referred to as a "hit or miss" rag rug, the early settlers introduced the craft to this country with this type of rug.



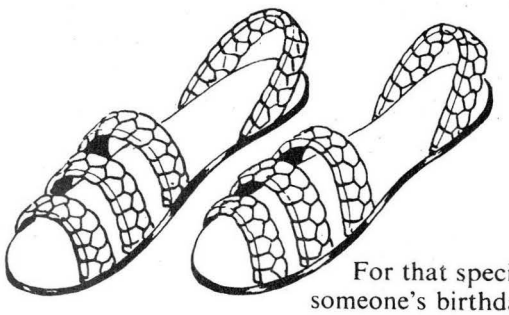
The exquisite Cape Codder portrayed above has a center piece of grey and light blue, heightened by a combination of two-tone blues. Definitely a simple design, the color scheme blends with modern as well as traditional period furniture.

The Cape Codder

Braided Novelties

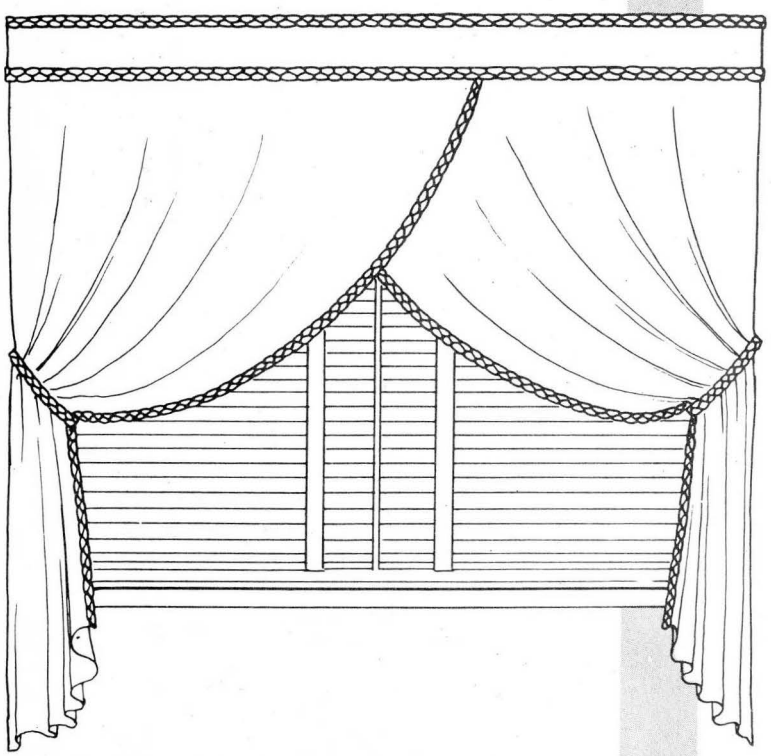


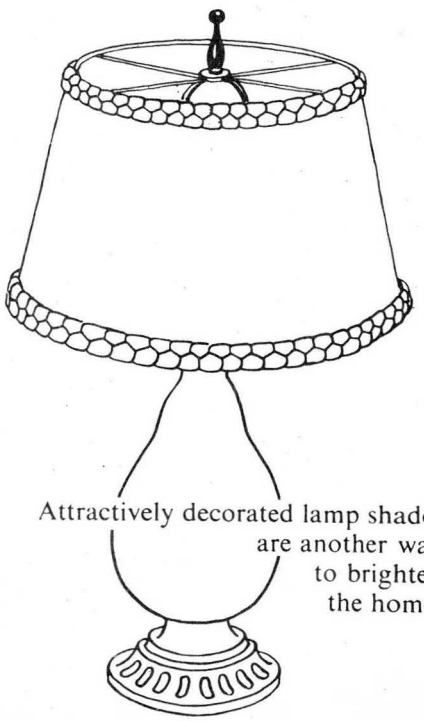
A most useful and beautiful accessory
to any lady's ensemble.



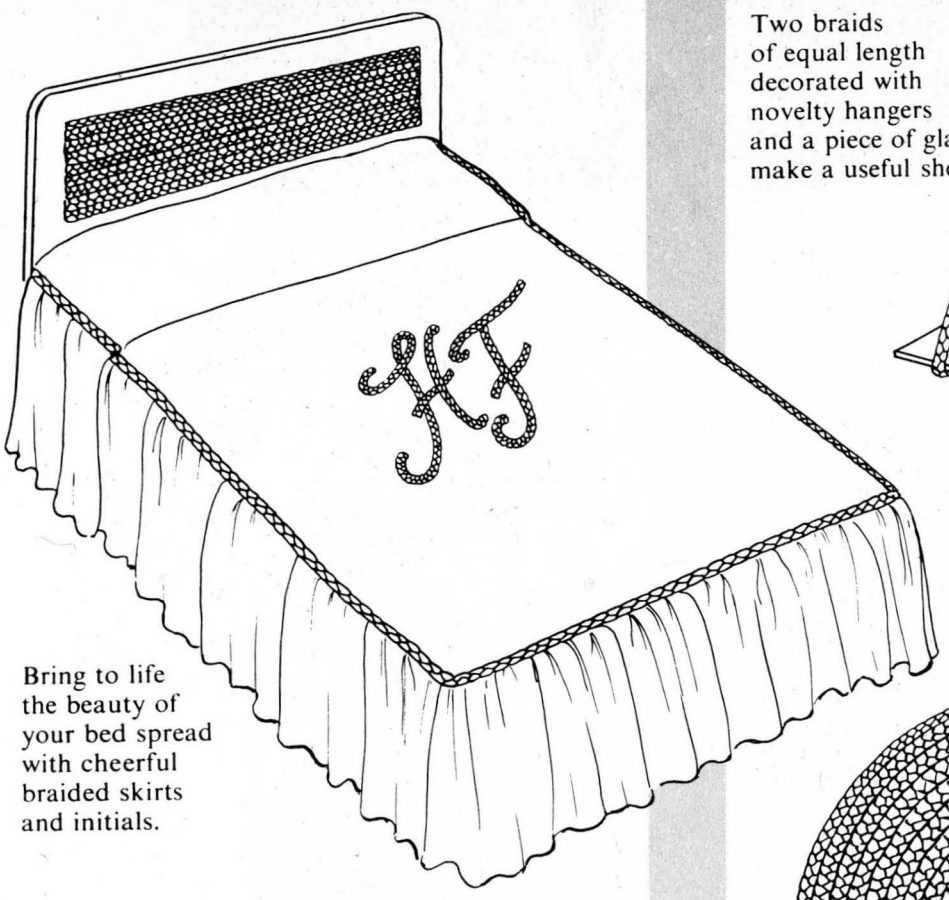
For that special
someone's birthday
or anniversary —
hand braided slippers.

Trim your drapes with braid
to make the room bright and cheery.



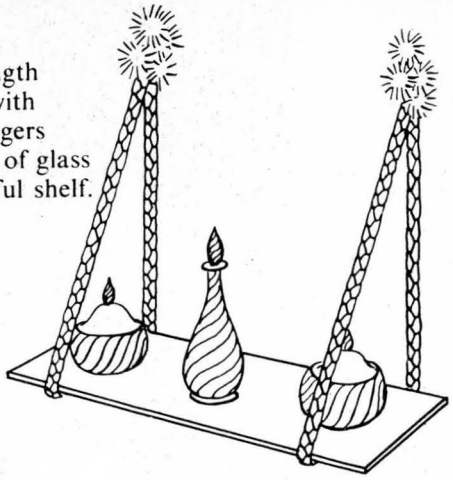


Attractively decorated lamp shades
are another way
to brighten
the home.

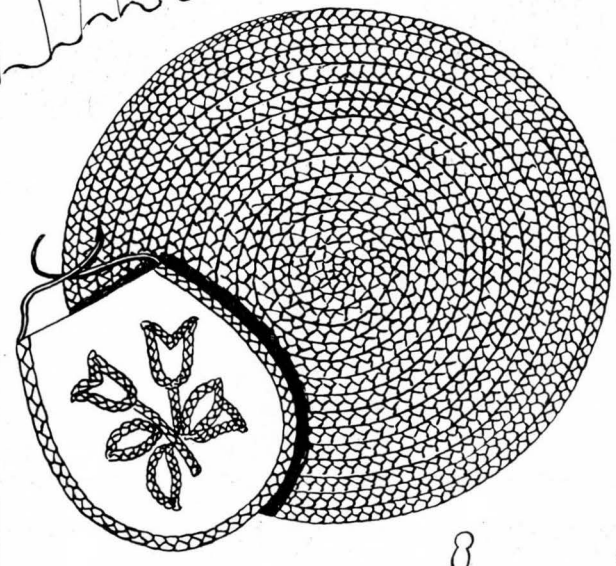


Bring to life
the beauty of
your bed spread
with cheerful
braided skirts
and initials.

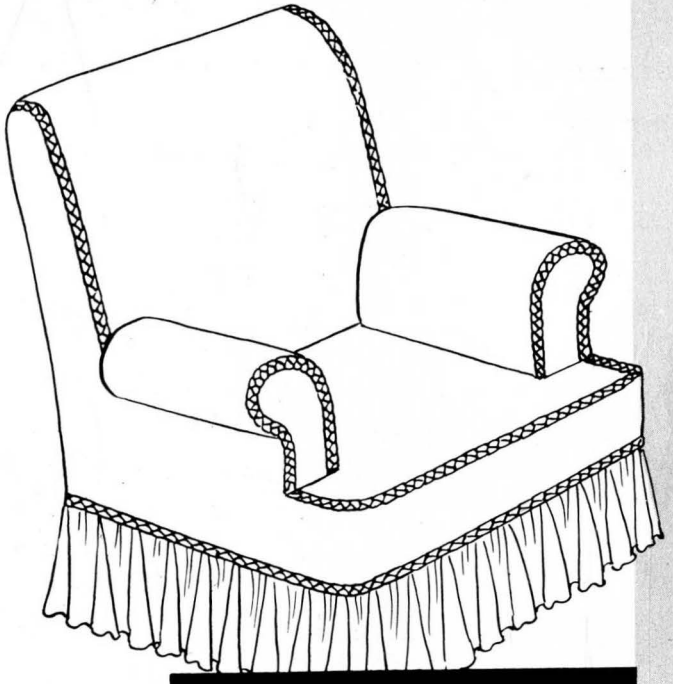
Two braids
of equal length
decorated with
novelty hangers
and a piece of glass
make a useful shelf.



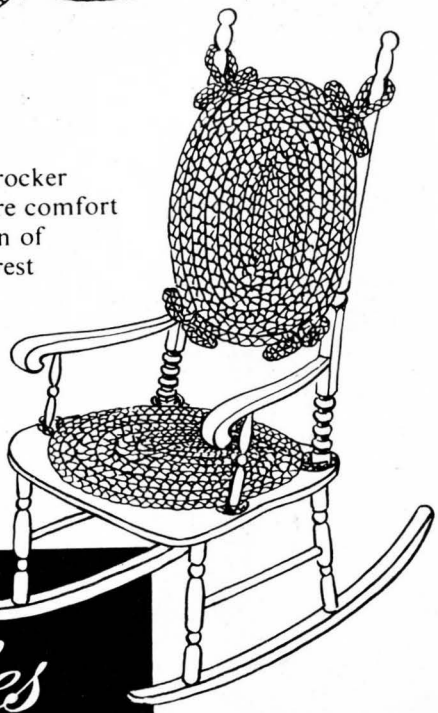
Toilet seat covers
and bath mats woven
in bright colors
will liven up
an otherwise
drab bathroom.



Trim the skirting and arms
of your chair covers with bright braiding
to bring out their extra beauty.



Grandma's old rocker
will take on more comfort
with the addition of
a braided back rest
and seat cover.

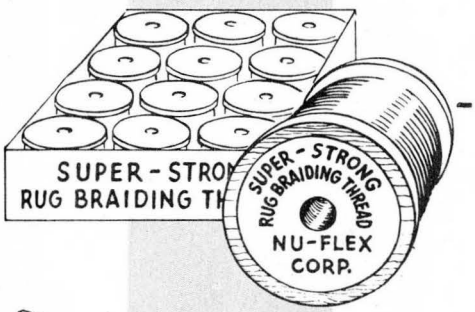


Braided Novelties

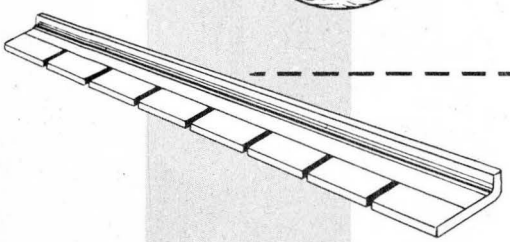
BRAIDED RUG ACCESSORIES

RUG BRAIDERS: This new rug-braiding set consists of three cloth folders which automatically fold the cloth strip and prepare the material for braiding.

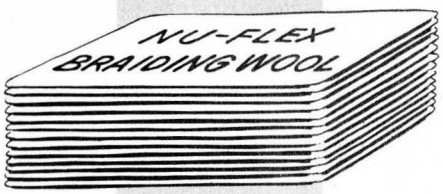
RUG LACER: This rug-braiding lacer eliminates all sewing and makes the rug completely reversible.



RUG-BRAIDING THREAD: This special super-strong rug-braiding thread guarantees a durable rug. It comes 12 spools in a box, each spool 100 yards in length.



MATERIAL GAUGE: This material gauge eliminates any guess work in arriving at the exact width of the material.



WOOL STRIPS: Available in all colors.

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